

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

INTELLOFAX 25

COUNTRY USSR/Germany (Soviet Zone)
SUBJECT Flame-Thrower Units in the Soviet Army

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1. Sometime in March 1951, at the end of the winter training period, there was a CPX for the 57th Gds Rifle Division in which officers from divisional headquarters and all staff officers of subordinate units participated. The CPX was organized by HQ, 8th Gds Army in Weimar and was held in the Weissenfels region (5112N-1158E). At this exercise the tactical problem called for an "Attack of a Reinforced Infantry Regiment on a Fortified Enemy Position". The actual order for this attack, prepared by HQ, 8th Army, described the problem of the regiment as follows:
.....The (?) regiment reinforced by the 665th Howitzer Regiment, 932nd Special AA Bn, 67th Eng Bn, one Bn of 128th Arty Regt, and one ORShO is assigned the task....."
2. Since the abbreviated term ORShO was completely unknown to officers attending this CPX, several of us went to ask an explanation of the term from the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, 57th Gds Rifle Div, Col Puzanov. Colonel Puzanov was a graduate of the Frunze Academy, a brilliant officer and the right hand man of the division commander. He explained that the term ORShO was the official abbreviation

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for "Otdel'naya Rota Shantsevykh Ognemetov" (Separate Company of Trench Flame-throwers). Col. Puzanov refused to give [] any further information []

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3. Being very familiar with the usual practices in formulating orders for tactical training and CPX's in the Soviet Army, and having had quite a bit of experience in this respect, the other officers and [] that such ORShO units were, in all probability, recently organized within the GOFG and would be assigned to reinforced infantry regiments and higher level tactical units in case of war or emergency. For never in my long years of experience with the Soviet Army have [] operational order for a maneuver or a CPX which mentioned any imaginary, non-existing units. [] that ORShO actually existed.

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